

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL  
held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

PRESENT: Cllrs. S Collins (who took the chair), R Noblett, A Toomey, G Nicholas, L Isko and C Griffiths

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Maliphant (Clerk), County Cllr. B Robinson and four local residents

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. M Phelps
2. There were no declarations of interest

### 3. Public Forum

A resident reiterated past concerns about a raised kerbstone near the village shop, and a blocked highways drain on the Latchen by the allotment-side bus stop. **ACTION: AM**

4. The clerk reported there had been no applications for co-option to the vacant councillor post.

### 5. Planning

The circulated planning report was received with thanks. After discussion, it was agreed there were no objections to the following proposals:

P0227/20/FUL The Dingle, Velthouse Lane - two storey extension, first floor extension  
P0192/20/FUL The Woodlands, Gloucester Road - proposed extensions, detached garage

It was agreed to ask for more information about the reason behind the proposed crown reduction of a horse chestnut at Station House, Station Lane, application P0177/20/TCA, before a comment could be made.

As information about application P0293/20/FUL for alterations and an extension at Richard Read Transport had only just been received, it was agreed to ask for an extension to allow the parish council more time to consider the proposals. The parish council were pleased to note that county highways were being consulted, but wanted to suggest a wider public consultation than just the three immediate neighbours, as this would be a big development for Longhope. Points that the parish council wanted some assurance about included:

- Bearing in mind the welcome presentation by the site owner at the January parish council meeting, had the issue of light pollution been addressed?
- What standards of energy efficiency would be used for the new structures?
- Could there be at least two electric vehicle charging points as part of the development?

The parish council were aware that it would not yet be known what tenants would come forward for the new facilities, but for the benefit of nearby residents, would like to suggest there be some conditions around any potential night working.

6. The minutes of the meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup> were agreed as a true record, with a clarification of the wording about the funds raised by the Teens Committee.

## 7. Members' Reports

AT offered to follow up concerns about postal deliveries raised by two new residents.

GN reported four police cars had attended a recent street disturbance following a young person's party in the Latchen Room, where it seemed no adults had been supervising. RN added that the party had left a mess that took four and a half hours to clear up, and the Latchen Room Management Committee would be reviewing its hiring policy.

SC reported a problem with the design stage for a new basket swing on the Recreation Ground, in that potential suppliers had been concerned about the strengths of the proposed wooden materials. CG offered to share her contact with a firm in Frome who specialise in wooden equipment.

**ACTION: CG**

RN reported that the parish council's vehicle-activated speed sign had been twisted, and he would fix it with the help of SC.

CG had been developing a response to climate change issues, and at a table at the Annual Parish Meeting in April would be addressing a number of emerging ideas, including:

- Forming a local climate change action and reference group
- Gathering impartial information about green energy, car sharing etc.
- Asking the parish council to support and share an information leaflet
- Developing an environmental checklist for reviewing planning applications
- Mapping what is already happening, such as rewilding and tree planting
- Supporting buying energy supplies and other items in bulk
- Researching good practice from elsewhere

LI added that there were already some environmental policies in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, and that if the Annual Parish Meeting were not held due to the coronavirus pandemic, information could be posted on the Longhope Villagers Group Facebook page.

BR reported that the County Council had gone into lockdown due to the pandemic, and all meetings had been cancelled. The health scrutiny committee had been going to look into aspects of hospital planning, meanwhile Ofsted had inspected the children's services again with the same report as before – "making progress, more work needed in certain areas".

Meanwhile there was concern at the District Council that there had not been a proper debate when approving their annual budget. There had been a thousand responses to the Local Plan consultation, including the idea for a new "eco-village" to meet housing targets – this might be a possibility, but could not be placed in certain areas such as the AONB, flood plains or the statutory Forest. The District Council had also declared a climate emergency, and was looking at a number of active measures including the supply of green energy.

## 8. Committee Reports

### (a) Latchen Room Management Committee

RN reported that the Latchen Room electrics had all been tested and certified, and a plumber was on the case for the boiler. There were a number of obstacles to the suggestion of extending the rear car park, but there was a good case for planting more trees as the parish-owned land was not needed for the community land trust project. AT added that the Woodland Trust had announced new grants for tree planting, and the parish council agreed in principle to plant more trees on the site.

## (b) Recreation Ground Management Committee

RN reported that at a recent meeting the current management team had relinquished the trusteeship of the Recreation Ground charity to the parish council. The latest fire risk assessment of the pavilion had noted there was no outward-opening door - in the short term one of the existing doors could be made two-way, but the suggestion was that one of the main doors be made outward-opening at a cost of around £350.

## 9. Clerk's Report & Correspondence

RN had tabled an updated parish emergency plan, which was received with thanks. In discussion about extension of the plan to cover the coronavirus pandemic, LI advised that two local people had started a volunteer group to help people who were self-isolating, and CG had volunteered to be the point of contact for the parish council. Forty-two volunteers had already come forward, and the practicalities of how they would operate were being worked out. It was agreed that a message about the new volunteer service would be put on the parish council Facebook page, a leaflet would be printed to be circulated around the parish, and contact made with the bakery and the shop. **ACTION: GN/LI/CG/RN**

There was further discussion about the potential for a food bank, and also an emergency fund to support whatever help local people might be needing. The clerk raised the question of a separate bank account for managing such a fund, and it was agreed to open a new treasurer's account with CG and the two lead volunteers Sarah and Izzy as signatories, with only one signature needed for the money to be made available. Thanks were recorded to Sarah and Izzy for their initiative in setting up the volunteer group.

Correspondence included:

- An email from a resident signposting possible extra funding for bus routes
- Messages from older residents asking for support during the pandemic
- Continuing concerns from residents around the state of Hobbs Lane
- Another resident's concern about bikes churning up nearby footpaths

## 10. Finance

The following invoices were approved for payment:

4 Seasons Worx	20.00	Mowing underpayment
4 Seasons Worx	88.50	Clearing blocked culvert
Merlin Waste	131.25	Dog waste collection, Mar
Glebe Contractors	1,176.00	May Hill tree surgery
Chapel Tree Services	600.00	Latchen Room tree surgery
Water Plus Ltd	39.59	Allotments water supply
National CLT Network	150.00	Membership
Andrew Maliphant	494.55	Salary - February
Andrew Maliphant	37.33	Expenses - February

It was also agreed that up to £2,000 would be made available for the emergency fund to support any necessary response to the current pandemic. Further, in the light of that situation, it was agreed the clerk would become a signatory to the parish bank accounts.

The monthly financial report was received with thanks. The clerk presented the bids for carrying out a new tree survey in the parish, and after discussion it was agreed to offer the contract to BJ Unwin Forestry Consultancy. **ACTION: AM**

## 11. Community Land Trust

The clerk reported that the Financial Conduct Authority had asked for some more details of the project as part of the process of registering Longhope Community Land Trust (CLT) as a community benefit society.

The first draft of the Longhope Housing Needs Survey had been received, which advised there were 23 households in housing need in the parish. The next stages in the project were putting out a brief to architects for the housing design, and also to web designers for a future Longhope CLT website.

12. Due to the pandemic, it was agreed there could be no more public meetings of the parish council. A notice to that effect would be put on the parish noticeboards, and the parish council would continue to work electronically. **ACTION: AM**

**Standing Orders were suspended at the end of the meeting in order that the Council could continue in "closed session" under the provisions of The Public (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960) as the business to be discussed was considered to be of a confidential nature.**

Signed:.....Chairman. Date:.....